Claims

[c1] 1. A system for automatically alerting a user to available information comprising:

parsing an electronic document to identify data representing any person;

identifying at least one person represented by the identified data;

retrieving information relating to each identified person from at least one electronic database; and

notifying the user that the retrieved information is available.

[c2] 2. The system of claim 1 further comprising automatically providing at least one communication access point related to the retrieved information.

[c3] 3. The system of claim 2 wherein each communication access point provides the user with an access point for initiating communication with each identified person.

[c4] 4. The system of claim 3 wherein the at least one access point for initiating communication includes any of an email address, an instant messaging account, a telephone number, a fax number, a physical address, and an Internet address for communicating with the identified person.

[c5] 5. The system of claim 1 wherein parsing an electronic document to identify data representing any person comprises identifying textual data associated with any person.

[c6] 6. The system of claim 5 wherein the textual data associated with any person includes any of: a name, an email address, a telephone number, a fax number, and a social security number.

[c7] 7. The system of claim 1 wherein parsing an electronic document to identify data representing any person comprises identifying graphical data associated with any person.

[c8] 8. The system of claim 7 wherein the graphical data associated with any person includes any image for representing at least one person.

[c9]   9. The system of claim 1 wherein identifying at least one person represented
              by the identified data comprises comparing the identified data to
              information in at least one electronic database to identify each person
              associated with the identified data.

[c10]   10. The system of claim 1 wherein notifying the user that the retrieved
              information is available comprises automatically providing an audible alert
              when the information is retrieved from the at least one electronic database.

[c11]   11. The system of claim 1 wherein notifying the user that the retrieved
              information is available comprises automatically providing a visible alert
              when the information is retrieved from the at least one electronic database.

[c12]   12. The system of claim 1 wherein notifying the user that the retrieved
              information is available comprises automatically providing an audible alert
              and a visible alert when the information is retrieved from the at least one
              electronic database.

[c13]   13. The system of claim 11 wherein the visible alert comprises dynamically
              modifying the appearance of the electronic document.

[c14]   14. The system of claim 13 wherein dynamically modifying the appearance of
              the electronic document comprises changing the appearance of the
              identified data.

[c15]   15. The system of claim 14 wherein dynamically modifying the appearance of
              the electronic document further comprises automatically associating at least
              one hyperlink with the identified data.

[c16]   16. The system of claim 11 wherein the visible alert comprises dynamically
              adding at least one presence indicator to the electronic document.

[c17]   17. The system of claim 16 further comprising automatically determining an
              online status for each identified person by querying at least one messaging
              account server for each identified person.

[cl8]　　　18. The system of claim 17 wherein each presence indicator graphically represents the online status of each identified person.

[cl9]　　　19. The system of claim 18 wherein the graphical representation of the online status of each identified person is automatically updated by re-querying the at least one messaging account server for each identified person.

[c20]　　　20. The system of claim 1 further comprising a graphical user interface for interacting with the retrieved information.

[c21]　　　21. The system of claim 20 wherein the graphical user interface comprises at least one pop-up window for displaying the retrieved information for each identified person.

[c22]　　　22.The system of claim 20 wherein the graphical user interface comprises at least one context-sensitive menu for interacting with the retrieved information for each identified person.

[c23]　　　23. The system of claim 20 wherein the graphical user interface comprises at least one hyperlink for accessing the retrieved information for each identified person via a computer pointing device.

[c24]　　　24. A computer-implemented process for automatically providing information on a computer display device, comprising:
scanning electronic data being rendered on the computer display device to identify information within the electronic data that represents at least one person;
identifying each person represented by the identified information;
retrieving information relating to each identified person from at least one electronic database; and
providing an alert for indicating that the retrieved information is available.

[c25]

25. The computer-implemented process of claim 24 further comprising a user interface for:

viewing the retrieved information; and

initiating communications with the identified person via at least one communication access point.

[c26]   26. The computer-implemented process of claim 24 wherein providing an alert comprises dynamically modifying the electronic data being rendered on the computer display device.

[c27]   27. The computer-implemented process of claim 26 wherein dynamically modifying the electronic data rendered on the computer display device comprises automatically changing the appearance of textual information representing the identified information.

[c28]   28. The computer-implemented process of claim 27 wherein dynamically modifying the electronic data rendered on the computer display device further comprises automatically associating at least one hyperlink with the textual information.

[c29]   29. The computer-implemented process of claim 26 wherein dynamically modifying the electronic data rendered on the computer display device comprises automatically changing the appearance of graphical information representing the identified information.

[c30]   30. The computer-implemented process of claim 29 wherein dynamically modifying the electronic data rendered on the computer display device further comprises automatically associating at least one hyperlink with the graphical information.

[c31]   31. The computer-implemented process of claim 26 wherein dynamically modifying the electronic data rendered on the computer display device comprises automatically adding at least one presence indicator to the electronic data.

[c32]

          32. The computer-implemented process of claim 31 wherein each presence indicator further comprises an associated pop-up window for providing the

retrieved information to a user.

[c33] 33. The computer-implemented process of claim 31 wherein each presence indicator further comprises an associated context-sensitive menu for providing the retrieved information to a user.

[c34] 34. The computer-implemented process of claim 31 wherein each presence indicator further comprises automatically indicating an online status of each identified person.

[c35] 35. The computer-implemented process of claim 24 wherein the retrieved information includes at least one communication access point for initiating communications with each identified person.

[c36] 36. The computer-implemented process of claim 24 wherein identifying each person represented by the identified information comprises comparing the identified information to data in at least one electronic database.

[c37] 37. A computer-readable medium having computer executable instructions for dynamically modifying an electronic document rendered on a computer display device, said computer executable instructions comprising:
detecting any information in the electronic document that represents at least one person;
identifying each person based on a comparison of the detected information to data in at least one electronic database;
retrieving data related to each identified person from at least one electronic database; and
dynamically modifying the electronic document by changing the appearance of the electronic document for alerting a user that data related to each identified person has been retrieved.

[c38] 38. The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein detecting any information in the electronic document that represents at least one person comprises identifying any data associated with any person.

[c39]　　　39. The computer-readable medium of claim 38 wherein identifying any data associated with any person comprises identifying characteristics of at least one image within the electronic document using at least one image recognition technique.

[c40]　　　40. The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein retrieving data related to each identified person from at least one electronic database comprises retrieving any of personal data and contact information from the at least one electronic database.

[c41]　　　41. The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein dynamically modifying the electronic document comprises changing the appearance of any text associated with the detected information.

[c42]　　　42. The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein changing the appearance of any text associated with the detected information further comprises associating at least one hyperlink with the text associated with the detected information.

[c43]　　　43. The computer-readable medium of claim 42 wherein the at least one hyperlink includes at least one link to the retrieved data.

[c44]　　　44. The computer-readable medium of claim 43 wherein the at least one link to the retrieved data includes at least one communication access point for initiating at least one communication with each identified person.

[c45]　　　45. The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein dynamically modifying the electronic document comprises changing the appearance of any image associated with the detected information and by associating at least one hyperlink with each image.

[c46]　　　46. The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein dynamically modifying the electronic document comprises automatically adding at least one presence indicator to the electronic document in association with the detected information.

[c47]   47. The computer-readable medium of claim 46 wherein each presence indicator further comprises an associated pop-up window for providing the retrieved information to a user.

[c48]   48. The computer-readable medium of claim 46 wherein each presence indicator further comprises an associated context-sensitive menu for providing the retrieved information to a user.

[c49]   49. The computer-readable medium of claim 46 wherein each presence indicator further comprises automatically indicating an online status of each identified person.

[c50]   50. The computer-readable medium of claim 37 further comprising a user interface for interacting with the retrieved data.